



DESIGN GUIDELINES

Façade Improvement Program

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TOWN OF CLINTON, MASSACHUSETTS

DRAFT

Downtown Design Guidelines

Contents

1. Introduction: Guide to the Guidelines.....	3
1.A Purpose.....	3
1.B Applicability	3
1.C Source Material	4
1.D Relationship to Other Codes and Regulations	5
1.E Façade Prototypes	5
2. Façades	5
2.A Façade Composition	9
Architectural Style.....	9
Articulation and Scale	9
Pattern of Doors and Windows.....	10
Transparency.....	10
2.B Façade Components.....	12
Entries and Doors.....	12
Windows	12
Security Grates.....	13
Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees.....	13
Ornamentation	15
Materials	16
Color.....	16
Lighting.....	16
Mechanical Equipment	17
Façade-Mounted Plantings	17
3. Signage.....	18
3.A Relationship to Town’s Zoning By-Laws	18
3.B General Guidelines for all Signage Types	18
Lighting.....	18
Colors	18

Materials	19
Content	19
3.C Guidelines for Specific Signage Types	19
Building Identification Signs.....	19
Street Address Number Signs	19
Building Plaque Signs	19
Business Signs	20
Façade Signs.....	20
Door Signs	21
Window Signs.....	21
Projecting and Hanging Signs.....	21
Awning Signs	22
Canopy Signs	22
Marquee Signs	22
Signs for Upper-story Uses.....	23
Signage to Parking Areas.....	23
Temporary Signs.....	23
Freestanding Signs	24
4. Site Improvements	25
4.A Pedestrian Areas	25
4.B Site Furnishings.....	25
4.C Site Landscaping	25
Sidewalk Plantings.....	25
Buffer Planting	25
4.D Parking Lots	26
Buffer Planting	26
Shade Trees.....	26
5. Glossary of Terms	27
6. References and Resources for Further Reading	29

1. Introduction: Guide to the Guidelines

These Design Guidelines have been assembled to be both a source of helpful information about good design practice for downtown projects in Clinton. The Guidelines focus on aspects of buildings and sites that are visible from public streets and vantage points – building facades, signage and site improvements.

The components are organized in four sections:

- **Introduction** – This section explains how the guidelines can be used and how they are organized. They provide a general context for understanding the variety of projects and architectural styles that compose the Downtown. It also includes helpful references for further information and guidance.
- **Facades** – This section describes sound design approaches to improving the visible exterior of buildings in the Downtown, include consideration of the composition of facades and approaches to the components that make up a design.
- **Signage** – This section focuses specifically on the variety of signs that may be used to identify buildings, help market the uses and tenants, and serve other purposes.
- **Site Improvements** – These guidelines discuss how site improvements – the landscaping, parking areas and other enhancements – can be designed to improve the value and appearance of a building.
- **Glossary of Terms** – Certain phrases and terms in these guidelines have specific meanings, and this section indicates a few important definitions.
- **References and Resources** – This is a list of additional publications and resources that may be useful to provide further information or ideas.

1.A Purpose of the Guidelines

These Design Guidelines are intended to assist everyone engaged in projects to restore and improve Clinton's downtown through reinvestment in the exterior of buildings, in new signage and in site improvements. The Guidelines provide a framework of desirable design characteristics that will enhance the attractiveness and value of the entire district, as well as the individual building and sites that compose the downtown. Specific purposes for the Design Guidelines include:

- **Design resource** – Assisting owners, designers and builders by providing a resource of ideas, principles and references to appropriate methods to enhance the appearance of their improvement projects
- **Review criteria** – Providing criteria for review, recommendations and decisions in the administration of façade and signage improvement grant or loan programs that may be administered by the Town. This may also include advisory reviews provided for Downtown projects where they may be helpful in conjunction with other mandatory reviews and approvals.

- **Guidance for Town projects** - Providing guidance in the design of improvements to Town-owned projects, or projects that include municipal funding, financing or other direct Town participation.
- **Enhanced economic value** – The design guidelines are intended to support a consistent quality and enhance the character of the buildings, sites, with particular emphasis on the pedestrian environment and the visual quality of the district as a whole. This interest is directly linked to the economic value for the entire community, as well as for the businesses and property owners. A more consistently attractive downtown that respects the distinctive historic buildings and heritage of the community will create a more desirable place to shop, live, work and visit
- **Historic preservation and adaptive reuse** – Clinton’s historic buildings and structures are cultural and historic resources that should be preserved and enhanced to provide for contemporary use wherever it is practical. These Guidelines indicate how the value of the existing historic buildings can be respected, restored or enhanced through thoughtful design.
- **Flexibility** – As guidelines, the purpose of this document is to provide shared, consistent bases for advancing and reviewing a wide range of projects. However, they are not intended as invariable formulas, because the circumstances of individual buildings and sites vary considerably and innovative solutions are often needed. The guidelines are intended to provide reasonable flexibility, so that innovative methods can be applied where that may best solve individual project needs. Alternative design approaches should be considered and used if they serve the same underlying principles and ideas expressed within these guidelines so that the resulting design reinforces the overall quality and coherence of the downtown as an historic, valuable mixed-use district.

1.B Applicability

The Design Guidelines have been assembled to support several specific applications, as well as being a general resource where they could also be useful.

- **Geographic area** – The Guidelines are intended to be used in areas that are traditionally understood and identified as Clinton’s downtown. This includes the compact mixed-use districts that include commercial, retail, residential, institutional and civic uses and include the historic collection of industrial buildings and complexes. More specific geographic boundaries may be defined and revised, depending upon the types of programs and initiatives that Clinton undertakes over time. Information about geographic location and eligibility for participation in design reviews should be determined through information obtained from the current programs in Town.
- **Project type** – The Guidelines apply to improvements to existing buildings and their sites. Although they are not intended to provide direction for new buildings or projects, many of the ideas and principles could be a useful resource to reinforce an urban design goal of creating compatible designs in the downtown that respect the historic resources and positive characteristics of the district.
- **Grant or loan programs** – This document is intended to specifically support the activities and decisions in the administration of façade and signage improvement programs within the Town.

In particular, they may be used to implement funding and grants obtained through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) sources, but are equally applicable to any type of similar program and funding sources that the Town administers.

- **Other programs and initiatives** – The guidelines may also apply to other programs or approval processes that the Town advances in the future, if it determines that they are useful for those purposes.

1.C Source Material

The Guidelines were prepared for the Town and its Community and Economic Development Office by The Cecil Group. Information from multiple sources has been considered and tailored for Clinton's unique characteristics. Preparation of the contents included consideration of previous Town of Clinton Guidelines and from best practices contained in guidelines prepared by The Cecil Group for other municipalities with similar historic downtowns.

1.D Relationship to Other Codes and Regulations

Renovation and construction projects are subject to a wide range of codes, regulations and legal standards that address many essential topics that are not the subject of these Design Guidelines. The owners, designers and builders of project must comply with all of the applicable requirements. In the event that there is a conflict between the directions provided in this document, established code or regulatory standards must be respected.

It is important to underline the importance of complying with the Town's by-laws, including zoning. For example, for many properties, the requirements in Clinton's Business-Retail District (BR) Zoning By-Laws are applicable to downtown Clinton properties. In addition, other relevant sections of the Zoning By-laws may include *Section 5300, Sign Requirements* and *Section 5400, General Landscaping Requirements*, or other sections.

For CDBG-funded improvements, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* may also apply. See the section on *References and Resources for Further Reading* for more information regarding these standards, and confirm their applicability in conjunction with the requirements associated with any CDBG-funded projects with the program administrators, as part of the application process.

1.E Façade Prototypes

The facades of building provide the public face of the structures and the uses that they enclose. The architectural approach to designing buildings has shifted over the time, expressing changing styles, technologies and economic needs. Clinton's downtown has remarkably varied and rich collection of building types and architectural styles. In applying the Guidelines, all of the participants should consider the underlying architecture of the buildings that are being improved, so that the appropriate qualities are recognized, preserved and enhanced. A shared language and terminology associated with dominant building types and styles is useful as a frame of reference.

The following list and images indicate a few examples of the prototypical façade designs that compose downtown Clinton to indicate how facades are categorized. There are other prototypical design styles that can be found in the downtown, as well as examples of hybrid approaches.

- Neo-classical Commercial Buildings** – In the mid-19th century, a pragmatic type of commercial building appeared in many American towns and cities, including Clinton. These buildings were either one-story tall or were multi-story boxes of repetitive floors. The lowest floor often devoted to retail or service businesses, while the upper floors were used for office, housing or other types of uses. The main facades facing the primary streets were often decorated using stylistic elements drawn from neo-classical inspirations, but were translated into simpler expressions that conformed with the relatively flat, rectangular buildings. A predominant characteristic is a balanced symmetry. Features vary significantly, but often include articulated cornices, belt-courses of stone, brick, metal or terra cotta that create a layered effect, distinguishing the lower stories from the upper stories. Designers found ways to add or express classical columns including column bases and capitals, and provided special features such as arches, enhanced entrances and window lintels to provide a varied expression. In contrast, the sides and rear facades of these buildings were deliberately spare, and provided simple windows normally organized with regular or symmetrical spacing. The street level facades typically featured large windows and storefronts composed in the same dominant style as the rest of the façade. This level has often been significantly altered in historic buildings of this style to accommodate different tenants, resulting in inconsistent styles, materials and composition that detract from the integrity and value of the building as a whole.
- Modern Commercial Buildings** – In the early to mid-20th century, an architectural style emerged from the “Modern Movement” that emphasized clean and simple lines and flat surfaces to compose many types of buildings, including commercial buildings. There are many variations of modern style buildings, but the fundamental characteristics are associated with the simple forms and surfaces, in contrast to the decorated and articulated neo-classical and other styles of the late 19th and early 20th century. Some examples of modern commercial buildings were compatible with downtown environments, but other examples rejected the tradition of large



windows and open entrances to the streets and sidewalks that have proven to be conducive to successful downtown environments.

- **Colonial Revival** – Beginning in the 1920's and 1930's, many designers created buildings and facades modeled after early American buildings – for which the preceding inspirations had come largely from England and the Georgian architecture popular during the mid-17th century. This derivative architectural style was often used on banks and civic buildings, and was very popular as a style inspiration for houses.



- **Neo-Classical Revival** – There was a significant movement to use classical Roman and European architecture as a source for the composition of buildings and facades, beginning in the mid-19th century and continuing into the early 20th century. Classically-trained architects emerged from special professional schools at this time, and Clinton has several outstanding examples of this sophisticated design movement.



- **Italianate** - The Italianate Style was popular during portions of the late 19th and early 20th century, and drew inspiration from the Renaissance architecture of Italy. Clinton's Town Hall is an excellent example of the civic buildings that this style inspired, as are some of the prominent residences at the edge of the downtown.
- **Victorian Residential Styles** – There are a number of architectural styles that flourished during the Victoria era that are present in Clinton, including variations on recognized categories such as Carpenter Gothic, Queen Anne, and Second Empire buildings.

- Industrial Architecture** – The industrial architecture of the 19th and early 20th century drew on historic traditions and classical elements to convey the quality and permanence of the buildings that enveloped contemporary industrial needs. These included brick and stone facades that expressed the regular spacing, columns, arches and basic ornamentation that conveyed neo-classical inspirations, but were modified to accommodate the large buildings and interior requirements for light, machinery, work space and the associated special structural needs.



- American Diner Style** – Clinton has an example of a distinctive American architectural style which originated in Providence and was popularized throughout the northeast, where buildings were specifically designed as small diners and appear to resemble train cars or mobile dining trucks in some manner.



2. Façades

2.A Facade Composition

Architectural Style

The changes to a building façade should be consistent with the original architectural style and the principles of composition that are typically associated with that style as evidenced in precedents and relevant examples.

Where possible, projects should include direct restoration of damaged or deteriorated components. In some cases, replacement of elements or new elements may be needed. However, replacement or new elements should restore the original expression of the façade and be consistent with the underlying style - although contemporary materials and components may be appropriate if they are visually compatible with the historic components.

In other cases, the underlying style may be damaged beyond pragmatic restoration, or the building's style is incompatible with the other purposes of these Guidelines. In those cases, the project design should adopt an appropriate and coherent design vocabulary drawn from recognized styles, which may include contemporary practices and trends as well as historic inspirations.

To facilitate the design and design review relative to architectural styles, the following steps should be undertaken:

- **Historic images** – Project proponents should locate and assemble historic images of the buildings as they appeared in previous eras as a reference.
- **Identification of existing architectural style** – Using reference materials, the proponents should identify the specific style that was used for the building's original design. This may also consider the styles associated with building components that may have been added or were part of previous renovations.
- **Identification of relevant models and precedents of the project's architectural style** – The proponent should identify similar buildings or improvement projects that have successfully restored or renovated buildings within the style that is inherent in the project's building. These models and precedents should be used to understand and communicate the desired character that will be associated with the completed project.

Articulation and Scale

The building façade should clearly define commercial ground-floor spaces, where they exist, and differentiate through articulation the ground floor from residential or office spaces on the stories above.



Articulation of the ground level of a building along its primary street frontage should visually anchor the building and provide human-scaled elements that improve the pedestrian environment.

Ground-level façades in non-commercial buildings should be articulated in such a way that they are visually compatible with adjacent commercial storefronts and maintain an active and inviting street level façade.

Pattern of Doors and Windows

The pattern of doors and windows in a façade helps create human scale and provide a high level of visibility and transparency that creates an interesting experience for pedestrians, and in the case of retail spaces, draws them into the interior spaces.

Door and window patterns and openings from the original architectural style should be preserved or restored, including conservation and repair to preserve historical details. Storefronts should fit within the building frame as formed by columns, *piers* and *cornices*. The reference point for a building that has been heavily altered may be a similar building in downtown. Windows that have been closed off or reduced in size from inappropriate prior renovations should be opened up to restore the original façade transparency. Common inappropriate changes that should be reversed are arched window openings that have been replaced with inappropriate rectangular windows, multi-paned windows where some of the glass panes have been replaced with solid metal or wood panes, and multi-paned windows where a single-paned or double-paned window is more appropriate.



Example of a streetscape with human-scaled ground-level facades. Each storefront is slightly different, but all share a common band for signage, a similar high level of transparency, and appropriate materials.

The most prominent door should be the one leading to ground-level space. For buildings with multiple ground-floor occupants, entries should be integrated into a coordinated ground-floor façade composition, with similar materials, signage, and ornamentation.

Transparency

Ground-floor windows and doors should remain largely transparent and unobstructed so as to establish a connection between the interior business and pedestrians on the street, and create an active and interesting facade.

Doors

Doors to ground-floor spaces should be largely transparent, with at least half of their area being clear glazing. All-glass doors are traditional and appropriate for many buildings in Clinton.

Doors to upper-story uses may have a simpler design than doors to ground-floor spaces. Fully-opaque doors, or doors with small lites, are appropriate for entries to upper-level residential spaces or basements and mechanical rooms. However, doors that lead to upper-story commercial spaces should be at least half transparent, to make it more inviting for clients or customers.

Windows

Ground-floor windows should remain largely transparent so as to visually connect pedestrians to the businesses within. Ground-level window openings should occupy at least forty (40) percent of the ground-floor façade area in buildings with ground-floor commercial or retail space. Items should not be placed in storefront windows that block views to internal activity, such as the backs of display cases, unless they are part of a display to the outside sidewalk or street.

On ground-floor windows, reflective, mirrored, tinted, and smoked glass are all prohibited. For very limited portions of a façade having mechanical or storage areas behind glass, translucent, etched, or spandrel glass is acceptable in order to screen the views to the interior.

Blinds and curtains should be prohibited on ground-floor facades, so that the transparency that makes downtown streets interesting for pedestrians is maintained. If a ground floor non-retail business, such as an attorney's office, desires privacy, it should reconfigure its interior space to place lobbies, corridors, meeting rooms, and other common spaces adjacent to street-facing windows, and move private offices to the rear.

On the other hand, perforated "solar shade" style blinds that reduce direct sunlight and glare and UV rays are permitted provided that they are rated for at least 10 percent openness and are fully retractable.

Advertising signs, calendars, sale signs, and other temporary-type signs that obscure the transparency are strongly discouraged, and are regulated in the Signage section, below.

Upper-floor windows should occupy at least twenty (25) percent of each upper-floor façade area.

Upper-floor windows for residential space should use roller blinds or curtains for privacy, rather than plastic slatted vertical blinds which create a commercial or institutional appearance.



Large, clear ground-floor retail windows visually draw pedestrians inside. Transom windows further increase the light into the building.

2.B Façade Components

Entries and Doors

Many buildings in downtown Clinton have recessed entryways to ground-floor spaces. These entries should be preserved or restored to their original format. The recess should remain open for the full height of the ground floor story; signs, panels, or other features should not shorten the recess' height.

Doors to ground-floor spaces should be transparent and inviting. Divided lite doors or side lites should be employed only if appropriate for the style of the building façade.

Entrances to upper-story residential in mixed-use buildings should where possible be located along a side street, in order to maintain active and transparent commercial ground floors downtown.



A storefront with a recessed entry, a façade sign, and a screened window sign..

Windows

Window openings that were part of the building's original design should be respected and reinstated if necessary. Original window and door frames should be saved and restored where possible. If new windows or doors are installed, they should follow a traditional style or be compatible with a building's overall appearance.

Ground-floor Windows

Storefront windows should be consistent in style with the building architecture, provide clarity and interest to the façade, provide for a high level of transparency, and be harmonious with other adjacent storefront windows.

Storefront windows that display products or services or views to an activity in which people are involved frequently during hours of operation are encouraged.



This wide storefront window is visually enriched by the ornate transom windows and decorative trim above. Engaging window displays provide visual interest on the sidewalk.

Upper-floor Windows

Upper-floor windows are typically smaller and more frequent than ground-floor windows. Traditional windows are framed with raised wood or stone sills and lintels, which create shadow lines and visual variety in the flat façade. Where they have been removed or altered, these framing elements should be restored.

Clerestory and Transom Windows

Where a building includes *clerestory* windows above the large storefront windows, or *transoms* over entries, these should be restored and preserved.

Window Displays

Retail storefront windows should be used to showcase the goods or services offered therein. Window displays with back panels (as opposed to those open to the store interior) should include interior lighting.

Security Grates

Roll-down security grates of solid metal are discouraged on windows and doors. Any security grates used should be the lattice-type that allow full view into the window and façade behind. Non-retractable security grates – such as those bolted to a smaller window – are discouraged.

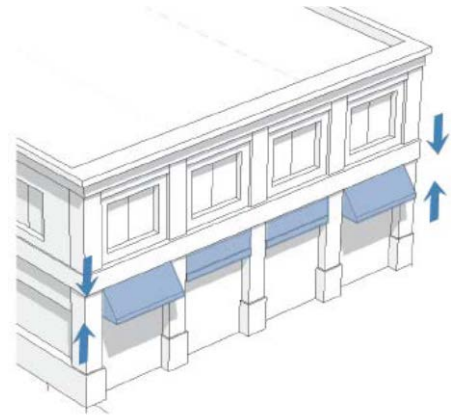
Awnings, Canopies, and Marquees

Awnings, canopies, and marquees may be used to provide a human-scaled element to the ground floor of building façades, shelter building entries from rain, and reduce glare and heat from summer sun to building interiors.

Awnings

An *awning* is a fabric structure mounted upon a metal framework used to provide shelter from sun and rain. The following guidelines apply.

- Placement** - The placement of awnings should relate to the structural bays of the building that are established by the rhythm of the ground-floor windows and entryways. Awnings should not obscure important building elements such as pilasters or columns, but rather should be placed between these framing elements. In the case of buildings with *clerestory* windows, awnings may be placed above or below these smaller windows, depending on factors such as the slope of the awning, the necessary vertical clearance, and the building's architectural character. Awnings are discouraged on upper-story windows. Multiple awnings on a single building should be located at the same height on the façade and mounted with the same placement relative to façade and structural elements.
- Mounting** - Awning mounting hardware and frames should be hidden from front and side view by the fabric.
- Size and Shape** - Awnings should not extend over the public sidewalk to a depth of more than four (4) feet. Valances and side panels are optional. The rigid framework of awnings should be at least eight (8) feet above the sidewalk, and suspended fabric valances should be at least seven (7) feet above the sidewalk. Fluted, curving, bullnose, or rounded awnings are discouraged as they look dated and often obscure too much of the building architecture. Awning valances, if



Awning placement should relate to the rhythm of windows and doors.

used, should have flat edges, not fluted. On multi-tenant buildings, multiple awnings may vary in content (e.g., different lettering or logos), but should be of consistent color, design, material, fabrication type, size, and profile.

- **Materials** - Opaque canvas fabric is preferred. Vinyl or plastic or similar shiny material is discouraged. Transparent or translucent awnings are also discouraged.
- **Lettering and Graphics** - See the **Signage** section for more information.



An awning placed appropriately within the recessed entry and window portion of a façade. Note also the window signs and the prominent façade sign with decorative trim.

Canopies

A *canopy* is a flat structure (horizontal or sloping), traditionally made of metal, which cantilevers outwards from a façade above the ground floor and projects over all or part of the sidewalk. Canopies are sometimes supported from the top by cables attached to the façade. Canopies provide an opportunity for complementing the architecture, providing a place for lighting and signage, and cover the sidewalk from rain and snow. The following guidelines apply:

- **Placement** - The placement of canopies should relate to the structural bays of the building that are established by the rhythm of the ground-floor windows and entryways. If used, canopies should at a minimum shelter the principal ground-floor entryway, and optionally may also extend to shelter windows and the entire façade. The placement should not conceal or require removal of architectural ornaments or features that are an attractive and appropriate part of the façade, but should be placed above or below them.
- **Mounting** - Canopies should be structurally cantilevered from the building. If necessary for function or appearance, cable wires providing addition support from the top are acceptable, but poles and columns should not be used to support the canopy from underneath.
- **Size and Shape** - Canopies should project no more than four (4) feet from the building façade. They should have straight or gently rounded corners. The canopy should be at least eight (8) feet above the sidewalk at all points.
- **Materials** - Metal framework (often visible) with metal, glass, or wood sheathing should be fabricated with materials that are coordinated with the colors and character of the canopy and façade, and should be of durable materials which are vandal resistant because of their mounding height and sturdiness.
- **Lettering and Graphics** - See the **Signage** section for more information.

Marquees

Marquees are bold projecting elements that include graphic signs, often with dimensional lettering and/or logos. They traditionally were common for theaters. The following guidelines apply:

- **Purpose** - Marquees are not a common feature of downtown buildings, and should be used sparingly. They may be used if a signature, iconic façade is desired.
- **Mounting** - Vertical marquees should be installed only at the corners of buildings, corners of projecting *bays*, or above the center of the principal ground-floor entryway. Horizontal marquees should be located above the center of the principal ground-floor entryway, and may extend to cover all or a portion of the façade, in a manner similar to a canopy.
- **Size and Shape** - Marquee proportion may be horizontal (as is common for movie theater marquees that display the current films playing) or vertical (as is common to spell out the name of the theater or venue).
- **Materials** - Marquees should have a metal structure.
- **Lighting** - Marquees should be internally lit, or externally lit from concealed lighting sources.
- **Lettering and Graphics** - See the **Signage** section for more information.

Ornamentation

Building facades should be most richly ornamented at the ground level, in order to establish a human-scale to the building and enliven the sidewalk experience for pedestrians. Architectural and structural elements of the building should have raised detailing, and flat façade areas may also be embellished with texture and detailing. Suggested locations for restoring ornamentation on existing, older buildings in downtown Clinton provided next. Restoration should be compatible with the character and architectural style of the building and reinforce the human-scaled aspects of the building design.

Architectural Elements

Suggested detailing around architectural and structural elements includes, but is not limited to, wood, stone, or metal framing around doors and windows; stone or masonry accents on columns, pilasters, and at corners and the base of the buildings.

Flat Elements

Flat areas of facades should have traditional or traditional-appearance materials such as wood paneling, brickwork, masonry, or plaster. Discrete, framed areas (such as the base of the building, the area inside recessed entries, or sign panels) may be further enriched with ornamentation such as tile work, decorative brick banding, and inlays. Above windows, *cornice* lines and belt courses are sometimes appropriate depending on the building architecture.

Transom and *clerestory* windows are good candidates for stained glass or textured / fritted glass.

Security grates, access panels, and window grills are good locations to provide artwork, decorative tiling, or ornamental metalwork.

Façade Plantings

Window boxes and hanging plants with seasonally-appropriate plantings are encouraged.

Materials

Appropriate Materials

Building façade materials should be harmonious with original building materials and the traditional styles of downtown Clinton. Appropriate façade materials are brick, stone (particularly for detailing on columns), masonry, fiber cement siding, cast iron, steel, tilework (particularly at the base of facades), decorative stone or plaster medallions (placed symmetrically on the façade), and glass. No more than three different materials should be used as primary façade materials; additional materials may be used sparingly for accent.

Application at Corners and Reveals

Applied façade materials should be extended around building corners and extensions, or used only in recessed *bays*, in order to avoid a “pasted-on” appearance. Any panelized façade covering mimicking brick should be applied in a manner that blends together and disguises any visible seams between panels.

Color

The palette of colors should draw from the traditional, older buildings in downtown Clinton. Brick and brownstone red, greys, muted yellow and buff tones, and muted greens and blues are most appropriate. No more than two or three colors should be used in a building’s façade.

Gold and silver are appropriate accent colors. Bright colors should be limited to accent areas such as trim, details, and small areas of lettering or logos.

Lighting

Lighting should render building colors correctly. Lighting should be in the white spectrum, and sodium and florescent light sources should be avoided. Lighting should not cast glare onto streets, public ways, or onto adjacent properties.

Façade Lighting

Façade lighting is encouraged as a method to subtly highlight and accentuate interesting features in a building’s structural and architectural form as seen from principal vantage points. The source for façade lighting should have limited or no visual impact on the façade. Lighting should be from concealed lighting fixtures; luminaires should not be directly visible from view of the sidewalk or street.

Entrance Lighting

Entrances may be lit with sconces on one or both sides of a door, or in the case of recessed entries, with overhead lights.



Example of a full-façade sign with uplighting.

Display Lighting

At night, display windows should be lit from within to make the merchandise display a form of store advertising and add light and interest to the sidewalk.

Holiday Lighting

Holiday lighting is encouraged within storefront window displays, on doorways, and on exterior facades. Holiday lighting should rely on electrical sockets and support brackets that are permanently installed in the façade. Electrical extension cords and temporary, low-quality supports such as tape and wires should be avoided because they create a disorganized appearance and are potential source of pedestrian trips and falls.

Site Lighting

Site lighting should use shielded and full cut-off fixtures that avoid spilling light onto neighboring streets, properties, structures and above into the night sky. Site lighting should use low height fixtures, between fourteen and seventeen feet, which should reinforce the human scale.

Mechanical Equipment

Location and Size

Through-the-wall air conditioners should be installed flush with the façade, rather than projecting.

Roof-mounted mechanical equipment such as air conditioning, heating units, exhaust fans and the like should be concealed from street-level public vantage points within architectural components consistent with the style of the associated building.

Screening

Wall-mounted mechanical equipment should be screened with louvered covers in the same color as the adjoining façade. Logos and brand names for air conditioners are discouraged, and should not exceed one inch in height.

Façade-Mounted Plantings

Hanging Plants

Facades should be enlivened with potted hanging plants placed between window and door openings. Such hanging plants should not project more than one foot from the façade, and should not interfere with pedestrian movements.

Window Boxes

Window box planters are recommended to bring additional greenery to facades. The planters should not extend beyond the sides of the window openings.



Window box planters can enliven a window

3. Signage

3.A Relationship to Town's Zoning By-Laws

The Town's **Zoning By-laws, Section 5360**, include regulations for Signs Permitted in the BR Districts. Note in particular:

(Section 5310) Signs may not be erected, enlarged, or structurally altered without a sign permit from the Building Commission, with the exception of unlighted signs one square foot or smaller.

(Section 5360) Total signage area may not exceed 32 square feet. The allowable sign area may be divided between two signs. The number of signs may be increased for buildings with multiple occupants, or for buildings having two or more street frontages.

The text below provides additional guidelines for the Town's permitted "attached signs" to supplement the Zoning By-laws.

3.B General Guidelines for all Signage Types

Typefaces used in signage should be compatible with the building architectural style, either a period font that echoes the style of the building, or a modern font that provides a clean contrast.

Lighting

Signs with opaque backgrounds should be lit from the exterior by wall-mounted, focused, directional lights such as goose neck lights or sconces. The lighting source should be shielded and the bulb exposure limited to that sufficient to illuminate the sign content.

Internally-lit signs require a special permit from the Planning Board (Town **Zoning By-laws, Section 5315, Illumination**). If approved, they should have a dark and opaque background, with the lighted areas are only used for the lettering and/or logos. Signage on doors and windows does not need additional lighting, because the interior business lighting will provide sufficient back lighting to render numbers legible.

Colors

Colors for signage should be tasteful and muted, compatible with the traditional historic downtown character. No more than two or three colors should be used. Classic, historic, and muted colors are ideal – black, brown, white, gold and silver, dark blue, red. The use of bright or garish colors – such as yellow or pink -- should be reserved for accent color only. Neon is prohibited except on marquees.



A good example of exterior lighting of façade signs using gooseneck lights.

[Materials](#)

Matte or flat backgrounds should be used for opaque sign backgrounds to reduce reflective glare and enhance legibility. Façade signs must be printed on durable wood, metal, or composite.

[Content](#)

Merchandising or advertising messages, logos, or other content should only be provided in Temporary Signs.

3.C Guidelines for Specific Signage Types

[Building Identification Signs](#)

- **Purpose** - Building identification signs may list any or all of the following: the building address, building name, and the building owner or property manager.
- **Location** - Building Identification signs should be located on the front façade, within the ground floor level, next to an entrance to the building.
- **Mounting Type** - Mounting hardware should be concealed.
- **Size**: Only one building identification sign is permitted per building, not to exceed one square foot in size.
- **Materials** - Building identification signs should be made of a durable material such as metal, wood, or composite. The weight and form should convey a sense of substance and permanence.

[Street Address Number Signs](#)

- **Purpose** - Street address numbers should be provided on all buildings, or at all storefront entrances having different address numbers, in order to aid in navigation.
- **Location** - Address numbers should be painted upon the glazed portion of a door, applied or affixed to solid doors, or mounted on the façade near the primary entrance.
- **Mounting Type** - Painted, screw-mounted, or screened.
- **Size** - Numbers should be legible from the far side of the street. Suggested height is four to six inches high.
- **Materials** - Against an opaque background, numbers should be individual metal figures pin-mounted to the façade or punched from a metal panel that is mounted to the facade. Interior-lit plastic numbers are permitted as well. When used on a glazed background, address numbers should be painted or screened.



Example of an attractive wall-mounted street address sign.

[Building Plaque Signs](#)

- **Purpose** - To indicate the building's architectural provenance, namely the year of construction, the architect or builder, and original purpose or occupants.
- **Location** - On front or side façade, within the ground level of the building.
- **Mounting Type** - Flush mounted to facade.

- **Size** - Not to exceed one square foot.
- **Materials** - For durability, building plaques must be made of metal. Suggested materials are bronze, stainless steel, cast iron, or other metal.
- **Colors** - In addition to the general color guidelines above, no more than two colors, including the background materials and the lettering, should be used. Colors should be subdued and discreet, for example black-rubbed letters on a brass plaque.

Business Signs

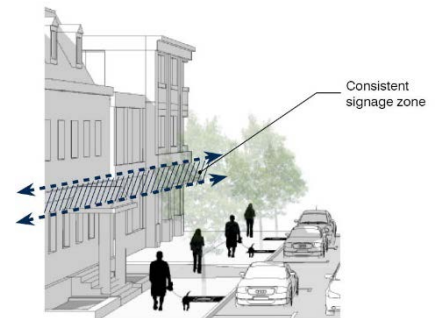
Business signs provide the name and optionally, the role or function of the business. They may also include a logo graphic. They should not include name brands of products or services offered in the business unless it is the primary role of the business.

Façade Signs

- **Purpose** - To identify the name of the occupant of the building, typically a retail or other commercial tenant, in a flat area on the façade designed to be legible to pedestrians on the far sidewalk of the street, as well as drivers.
- **Location** - Façade signs should be affixed flat to the building façade. Typically, they are placed in the sign band or *entablature* that extends in a consistent zone across the façade above the windows and doors. Buildings having such signage areas should place the most prominent signage here. Signs should not obscure architectural features of the buildings such as columns, windows, or recessed entries. Signs for buildings with multiple tenants should use a consistent height and line for the sign band. Signage should not be placed on the upper façade of multi-story buildings.
- **Mounting Type** - Individual pin-mounted letters, or letters painted on or affixed to a signage board. Dimensional signs (such as carved relief or individually-pin-mounted lettering) are encouraged.
- **Size** - Façade signs area should not exceed two square feet for each linear foot of storefront width. Sign height should be chosen to fit comfortably within the area above the windows, or on any awning or canopy or marquee. Per **Zoning By-Laws Section 5323**, signs extending above 12 feet in height require a special permit from the Planning Board.
- **Materials** - Signs materials should be compatible with the materials of the façade. They should be easily-maintainable and capable of withstanding climate variations. Painted wood or metal is the preferred background, and letters may be painted, carved into wood, or individually mounted.



Example of a unique business name sign that conveys the character of the business while using only two colors. Note the exterior gooseneck lighting.



Where the architectural style permits, façade signage should be placed in a consistent sign band zone across buildings.

Door Signs

- **Purpose** - Door signs present at pedestrian eye-height the name of the business(es) using that door.
- **Location** - At eye-height upon each door to a retail business.
- **Mounting Type** - Door signs may be upon a hanging sign mounted on the inside of the door, or painted, screened, or etched upon the glazing.
- **Size** - Door signs should not exceed one square foot in area.
- **Materials** - Screened or painted onto glass

Window Signs

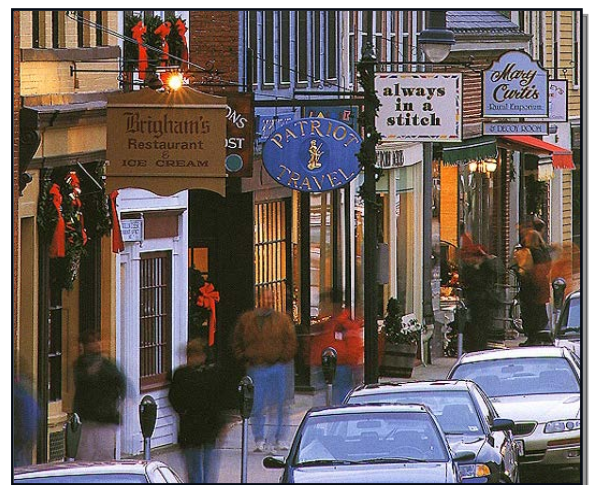
- **Purpose** - Window signs present the name of the ground-floor business, typically a retail store, and sometimes the logo or graphic associated with the business name. For example, a café might have its name as well as a stylized coffee cup.
- **Location** - Window signs should be painted or screened on the inside of retail or storefront-style windows.
- **Mounting Type** - Decals or painted lettering and graphics that permit views into the interior space.
- **Size** - No more than one sign for each window. The sign should be “airy,” with letters and graphics generously spaced so as to preserve the view into the ground-floor space even through a large sign. Alternately, a compact, largely opaque window sign should not occupy more than 10 percent of the glass area.
- **Materials** - Screened or painted onto glass.



Example of a large window sign combining text and a logo that maintains the visibility into the storefront.

Projecting and Hanging Signs

- **Purpose** - To provide smaller-scale information on the business name and specialty for pedestrians walking on the sidewalk on the same side of the street as the business.
- **Location** - Projecting and hanging signs should be placed at least 7 feet above the sidewalk grade, but below any awning or canopy, and above or close to business entries. Alternately, hanging signs are permitted inside the window or door of a business.
- **Mounting type** - Projecting signs are immovable, fixed to the façade with brackets attached on one side. Hanging signs are secured to the façade, window, or door with chains or pins attached the top.



Projecting and hanging signs provide information to pedestrians on the sidewalk. A wide variety of shapes and styles may be created while remaining with common formats – here, one or two colors on a wooden board.

- **Size:** Each projecting or hanging sign should not exceed four square feet in area, and should not extend over the public sidewalk by more than two feet (per **Zoning By-laws, Section 5324**). Signage content should be applied to both sides of a projecting sign.
- **Materials** - Wood and metal are preferred materials for projecting and hanging signs. Interior-lit styles are discouraged.

Awning Signs

- **Purpose** - Awning sign content should be limited to business names and/or logos. Other information should not be included on awnings.
- **Location** - Awning Signs may be provided on an awning where a flat façade sign is not possible above the ground-floor windows. Lettering and a logo may be located on the top awning panel. Lettering may also be located on the front *valance*, if it exists.
- **Size** - Lettering on awning valances should leave “breathing room” space at top and bottom. Lettering should be spaced out across the valance rather than crowded together. Lettering on the top portion of an awning should be no more than 75 percent of the height and 50 percent of the width of the top plane.
- **Materials** - Awning signs should be painted or screened directly onto the fabric.
- **Color** - Lettering and logos on awnings should be provided in one color only, selected to enhance contrast and readability against the fabric background. White lettering should be used against dark awning colors, and black or a dark, muted color against a lighter-color awning.

Canopy Signs

- **Purpose** - Canopy signs should be limited to the name of the building or business or the numerical building address. Logos and other graphics should not be included on canopies.
- **Location** - Canopy sign lettering should be mounted at on the top of the canopy, at the front edge. Only one canopy sign per building is permitted.
- **Size** - Lettering for canopy signs should not exceed two (2) feet in height. Width may vary with the information presented. s
- **Materials** - Lettering should be in the form of individual, channel-cut characters of metal, wood, or composite. Internally-lit, translucent lettering is acceptable. Visible structural brackets or pins are encouraged, in keeping with the canopy character.
- **Colors** - Canopy sign lettering should use only one or two colors.



Example of signage mounted vertically above a canopy.

Marquee Signs

- **Purpose** - Marquee sign painted on or attached to a marquee are intended to provide the venue or facility's name as well as changeable copy related to current and future attractions.

- **Location** - Marquee signs should be located on marquees. No more than one marquee sign is permitted upon a marquee, provided that the building does not also have a Façade Sign on the same façade.
- **Size** - If changeable copy is provided on the venue, the venue or facility name should not occupy more than roughly a third of the total marquee sign area. The changeable copy may occupy up to two-thirds of the total marquee sign area. If no changeable copy is provided on the marquee, the venue or facility name may occupy up to 75 percent of the sign area.
- **Materials** - Changeable copy should use moveable black lettering. Venue name may be rendered in neon tube or individually-shaped letters that are either internally-lit or lit from concealed external sources.
- **Colors** - Bright colors that draw from traditional neon colors are common for the venue / facility name on marquees. Changeable copy should be simple black lettering against a white background.



A typical theater marquee including venue name and changeable copy.

Signs for Upper-story Uses

- **Purpose** - Signage for upper-story commercial occupants identifies the business to pedestrians on the sidewalk. It is not intended to be legible from across the street or by a driver in a car.
- **Location** - Signage may be located on the door to the upper story, and should meet the guidelines for **Door Signs**, above. The names of any upper-story occupant(s) may also be included in one tenant sign per building, to be placed on the ground level façade, and meeting the guidelines for **Building Identification Signs**, above.
- **Size** - See the Section on **Door Signs** or the section on **Building Identification Signs**, as appropriate.
- **Materials** - See the Section on **Door Signs** or the section on **Building Identification Signs**, as appropriate.

Signage to Parking Areas

Signage to rear parking areas should be visible from the middle of the street. The content of the sign should be easy to read amidst all the other distractions from a car driving down the street. A simple and iconic symbol such as a large blue “P” is often the most effective.

Temporary Signs

Per **Zoning By-laws Section 5330, Temporary Signs**, temporary signs may be posted for up to 45 days prior to an event, and should be removed within 7 days after the event. Such signs should not exceed 20

square feet in the BR District. The following additional guidelines are suggested below for these sign types.

- **Location** - Temporary signs are permitted to be hung inside ground-floor windows and doors to advertise temporary events, sales, and promotions. Temporary signs should not be hung on other areas of the façade.
- **Size** - Each signs should not exceed two feet in height, and should be placed below eye-height within the window or door. The total area of all such signs for each business at any one time should not exceed 20 percent of the business' glazed window and door area, or 20 square feet, whichever is smaller.
- **Materials** - Signs may be printed on paper, vinyl, or other solid material, or screened directly on windows and doors. To maintain views into ground floor spaces, signs that consist only of lettering applied directly to the glazing are encouraged.
- **Duration** - Signs may not be posted longer than 15 days. After their removal, no additional signs of the same type may be mounted for at least 15 days.

Freestanding Signs

Sandwich Signs

The Town's **Zoning By-laws, Section 5325, Sandwich Signs**, prohibit "wood sandwich or A-frame type signs" as well as "metal or plastic framed temporary advertising signs on light gauge brackets and/or wheels."

Other Freestanding Signs

Size and Placement: Per Zoning By-laws, Section 5366, Freestanding Signs, one freestanding sign up to 32 square feet may be placed in the front yard, but only if the building has a minimum setback of 30 feet and the sign is set back 15 feet from the street line and 20 feet from any side lot line. Given the placement of most existing buildings downtown, freestanding signs may only be located in a few locations.

Materials - Freestanding signs should not obscure views of the building's principal entry. Signs should be set within a landscaped area. Lighting should be indirect rather than internal.



Attractive recessed entrance and hanging business sign. Note that this chalkboard-style sandwich signs is prohibited within the Clinton Zoning.

4. Site Improvements

4.A Pedestrian Areas

Front setbacks adjoining setbacks, side yard setbacks, and walkways between buildings should be maintained as attractive features of the streetscape and adjoining buildings.

Pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided in pedestrian areas located to the side or rear of buildings. Such lighting may take the form of street lamps, bollard lighting, or recessed ground lighting.

4.B Site Furnishings

Permanent street furniture including light fixtures, benches, bike racks, trash and recycling receptacles, and newspaper stands should be consistent with Town standards. All street furniture should be integrated with street and sidewalk circulation to ensure adequate clearances, access and convenience of the location of these amenities. Street furniture should be clustered at convenient locations that are plainly visible and accessible.

4.C Site Landscaping

Sidewalk Plantings

Businesses are encouraged to improve the street frontage with planters located within the front setback or at the sidewalk curb. However, planters should not interfere with the ability of pedestrians to open doors and access the passenger side of cars.

Buffer Planting

All views that could be associated with a negative impact should be screened with strategically selected and located landscape features. This includes trash/recycling bins and dumpster areas and loading areas.



Example of using lighting, seating, artwork, and landscaping to define an inviting pedestrian area in front of a storefront.



Street furniture integrated with the streetscape helps draw pedestrians to linger and enjoy downtown.



Example of planters located within the front setback

4.D Parking Lots

Buffer Planting

Landscape buffers should be used to screen parking, loading, and service areas that may be visible from public streets or open spaces. Screening may include architectural walls, fences or other visual barriers. Parking lots that adjoin public streets should have buffer plantings or structures to soften the views of cars. Low masonry walls or picket fences are ideal screening devices because they serve their purpose year-round. Fences erected between the building setback line and the sidewalk should not be more than four (4) feet in height and should not be more than one-half (1/2) solid, and stone walls should not be more than three (3) feet in height. Buffer plantings should include some evergreen plants and/or plantings that retain a woody structure throughout the winter.



A low split-rail fence and planted buffer soften the street-facing edge of a parking lot and create a more inviting sidewalk.

Shade Trees

Parking lots should also include shade tree plantings around the perimeter and if possible scattered “orchard style” (regularly spaced) around the interior of the parking lot.



Shade trees should be placed throughout the parking lot interior and perimeter. Edges should be buffered and softened with plantings.

See also the Town’s **Zoning By-Laws, Section 5170, Landscaping for Parking Areas.**

5. Glossary of Terms

Words used in the text are *italicized* if they are defined in the Glossary below. For additional information on architectural terms, please refer to the Wikipedia website¹ or the books listed in the next section.

Awning - A fabric structure mounted upon a metal framework used to provide shelter from sun and rain.

Bay - For façade design, a bay is the expression of an internal structural division of a building in the façade, and is defined by architectural elements such as columns, pilasters, windows, or recessed and projecting masses.

Canopy - A flat structure (horizontal or sloping), traditionally made of metal, which cantilevers outwards from a façade above the ground floor and projects over all or part of the sidewalk. Canopies are sometimes supported from the top by cables attached to the facade. Historically, they were common on certain building types such as theaters and on community-oriented buildings and places of assembly such as veteran's halls. Today, canopies are popular for larger contemporary retail storefronts, as they can impart a modern, streamlined, or industrial feel.

Clerestory - Generally, a window placed high within the ground floor portion of a building, typically much wider than tall, which admits light into the interior while maintaining privacy from the street. Also refers to a secondary band of windows above large storefront windows, which follow the same pattern of openings.

Cornice - The upper section of an entablature, a projecting shelf along the top of a wall often supported by brackets or corbels. Cornices are common on the top edge of a building, as well as along the top of a projecting retail façade storefront or other horizontal components of a façade.

Entablature - The upper panel of moldings and bands which lie horizontally above columns. Entablatures are important elements of classical architecture. They are a common area to provide the most prominent signage for a building.

Marquee - Marquees are bold projecting elements that include graphic signs, often with dimensional lettering and/or logos. They traditionally were common for theaters. They typically are internally-lit, or use neon signage.

Pier - An upright support for a superstructure, such as an arch or bridge. Specific to facades, it often refers to a raised column-like element used to frame windows or bays.

Transom - A short window or panel above a door that has the same width as the door and has its own frame. Transom windows were traditionally operable, but are more frequently fixed elements in contemporary storefronts and building entrances.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_architecture

Valance - A valance is the front “skirt” panel of a fabric awning, typically between five and ten inches in height, used to hide the structural panels of the awning. Valances are often used as a surface for simple lettering displaying the name of the associated retail business.

6. References and Resources for Further Reading

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1984.

Phillips, Steven J. *Old House Dictionary*. The Preservation Press: National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C., 1994.

Poppeliers, John, S. Allen Chambers, and Nancy B. Schwartz. *What Style is it?* Preservation Press: National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington, D.C., 1983.

Whiffen, Marcus. *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*. M.I.T. Press, Cambridge, 1992.

Fleming, John and Honour, Hugh and Pevsner, Nikolaus. *The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture* (Fifth edition), Penguin Books, 2000.

Department of Interior Regulations, 36 Code of Federal Regulations 67, *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Available at <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm>.